What is claimed is:

1. A method of installing a gasket in a socket end of a thermoplastic pipe which is used to form a pipe coupling, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a mandrel with an inner end and an outer end and having a generally cylindrical outer working surface;

installing a gasket at a first circumferential position on the outer working surface, the gasket having at least selected surfaces coated with an external nylon anti-corrosion and anti-friction coating;

providing a retention member at a second circumferential location on the mandrel nearer the inner end of the mandrel, the retention member abutting the gasket in a normally extended position but being retractable to a retracted position in a subsequent manufacturing step;

heating a socket end of the thermoplastic pipe;

forcing the heated socket end of the thermoplastic pipe over the working surface of the mandrel and over the gasket with the retention member being in the extended position, whereby the heated socket end of the thermoplastic pipe flows over the gasket to form a retention groove for retaining the gasket and again contacts the working surface of the mandrel;

cooling the heated socket end of the thermoplastic pipe;

retracting the cooled socket end of the thermoplastic pipe and the retained gasket from the working surface of the mandrel.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the coating is selected from the group consisting of Polyamide 6, Polyamide 11 and Polyamide 12 nylon coatings.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the external coating is a nylon coating sold by Atofina Corporation under the brandname RILSAN®.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the external coating is sprayed on.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the external coating is applied by dipping the gasket.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the gasket is an elastomeric, ring shaped member having a circumferential contact area and an exterior surface, and wherein the coating is applied to at least selected portions of the circumferential contact area.

7. An improved sealing gasket for sealing fluid conveying piping systems, the gasket comprising:

an elastomeric, ring shaped member having a circumferential contact area and an exterior surface, and wherein an external nylon polymeric coating is applied to at least selected portions of the circumferential contact area.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the coating is selected from the group consisting of Polyamide 6, Polyamide 11 and Polyamide 12 nylon coatings.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the external coating is a nylon coating sold by Atofina Corporation under the brandname RILSAN®.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the external coating is sprayed on.

11. The method of claim 7, wherein the external coating is applied by dipping the gasket.